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Wayside Gatherings.

God Proposes Man Disposes.

Speaking on the subject—which is the very opposite of the familiar proverb—at New Court Congregational Church, the Rev. Arthur Hird delivered a very courageous address: "Are there limits to man's free will?" he asked. "Of course there are, but I don't know what they are. I believe I am free to be a real man or a real devil, as I will . . . . On the one hand we have a living God, on the other, man with the power to say 'I will,' or 'I won't.' Why then did God make man capable of sinning against Him? I don't know. But we do know that God has taken the risk. When man will not, God cannot. Before a man's impenitence both God and man are impotent . . . . . we live in a world where we may be lost—whatever that may mean, and what it means, no human mind has fathomed; and we live in a world where the comradeship of the eternal God will do everything it can do to save man and if that can't do it, nothing will."

* *

The Sermon on the Mount.

"The Sermon on the Mount is the last thing in the world to support the idea that Jesus was beautiful and ineffective, a mere pale spirit absorbed in contemplation of a rainbow until he crashed against a cross. His love had in it an astringent quality; he had love enough to be satirical at times, and ruthlessly denunciatory. Had anyone said to him, 'Your sermon will not work because men will not adopt it,' he would have smiled sadly and replied, 'I know it, but I am not promulgating it because it will be popular but only because it is true."—Dr. Norwood.

* *

The John Clifford Lecture.

Mr. Philip Snowden gave the John Clifford Lecture at the recent Brotherhood Conference at Hastings. Speaking with a unique experience of addressing great audiences of working men and women, and from a long and intimate acquaintance with Labour movements he said without hesitation that there was "a deep and genuine religious feeling and sentiment among the great mass of the common people of our land. They may profess no dogmatic creeds but the humanity of Jesus and the sentiment of brotherhood never fail to get a sympathetic response."

* *

On the Main Business of Life.

Sir Harry Lauder is noted for making men think as well as smile. Here is an illustration from one of his addresses: "Some years ago I was sitting at dusk at the window of a house in Scotland, so situated that it commanded the view of an entire street of the City. Suddenly there came out from the alley-way near the house a man with a lighted torch on the end of a stick. Going to a lamp-post near by he thrust the torch to the nozzle of the gas-jet, which immediately burnt into light. He then went to the next post, where the flame from the little torch awakened another blaze of light. I was watching that lamp-lighter as he pursued his task, and long after his form became indistinguishable I could trace his movements by the lamps he lighted and the long trail of lights that he left behind. Your business and mine, my friend, is to so live that after our personalities have become lost in the shadows, we shall leave behind us a trail of light that will guide the steps of those who otherwise may walk in darkness." —A. W.

Notes of the Month.

The Open Door.

Our pulpits everywhere have given the warmest welcome to the conviction that it is folly, even criminal, to shut the door of access to Christ. Our Churches have existed on the supposition that no man can shut it for the reason that it is an ever-open door. All attempts to narrow it, to accumulate difficulties at its entrance, to confine its use to certain types of mind, to impose conditions of admission are alien to the gentle, loving spirit of Christ, and sooner or later will end in failure. We have been taught, in broad general outline, that the door of Christian opportunity is open to all without possibility of its ever being closed ; were it, by any chance, liable to be barred, then it might be said, with some show of reason, that the opportunity to enter the Christian way is denied. Rather than this should happen the door is ever wide open, and any one who desires may enter in. On the one hand there is no compulsion except the sacred urge present in every true heart to find entrance into the fuller life ; on the other hand no one will be attracted to the open door or even be able to discern it who is not in full sympathy with the Christ spirit, for it is a spiritual entrance and only visible to him who sees with the eyes of the spirit.

The impulse to fuller life is a human one. The door is open for that purpose and no other. The opportunity is there to take advantage of it. Our ordinances and organisations are to further the workings of the Spirit in every human soul they can influence. Every church is fulfilling its purpose when it facilitates the entrance of the divine life into the individual lives of which it is composed. It aids and abets its members to receive more and more the Holy Spirit as its fruits are manifest in their midst. So far, the Church has full scope to witness to the spirit of God in the world. But when the authority of the Church becomes censorious, expresses doubts of a man's intellectual fitness, questions his sincerity, or is suspicious of his preparedness ; then the Church is travelling far beyond its province, exercises an authority it never received, pronounces sentence on matters beyond its knowledge, and endeavours to interfere between men and the divine life. If the Church, too, is not an open door whereby every soul may enter the fuller life in the Christ spirit, then other means will be found to reach it. The Church of every description and name can only carry on on the assumption that the door is open to all ; and if by reason of blindness, bigotry, intolerance, or narrowness of outlook, it makes the way difficult to find it is signing its own death warrant, and, at the same time, causing men to look for it in other and unaccustomed ways.

It is very important for all to understand the nature and composition of the Church. In the light of the New Testament we conceive it as an opportunity for all men like-minded to enter into the fuller fellowship of the Christ life. It is true that later developments have regarded the Church as though it were itself the open door and as though only through it the way of the full life of the spirit is open. This view of the Church resulted in extravagant claims. The way to blessedness was barred except by means of full submission to ecclesiastical authority. The papal Court promulgated its incredible dogma of its own infallibility ; that it had received from Christ, through the apostles, the power on earth to bind and to loose ; that entrance to heaven was through the Church alone. This was to attempt to shut the open door with a vengeance and to institute a tyranny that speedily became intolerable. The open door was thus declared to be barred to all except to such as accepted the absolute jurisdiction of the papal court. Is there any wonder that nations protested against the superstitions, follies and extravagant claims of the Roman Hierarchy? Protestantism arose to assert that the way was open, that grace is the gift of God, and not the perquisite of the Pope. Neither is the Church in itself an authority in divine things except in so far as its members respect and keep the word of Christ and live ever in His Spirit. The Church as a human institution is a repository of the faith and experience of its members. In this respect it is rich and full of nourishment. Men may go to it, be refreshed and instructed in knowledge of divine truth. But grace is not its gift. The open door does not receive its maintenance from any institution, rather the contrary : grace comes from God to the

Church in so far as it is worthy to receive it.

The following contribution by an esteemed correspondent indicates that the open door of Christ's disciples is still assailed on behalf of a Church that maintains it is the one and only possible representative of Christ on earth.

* * *

ROME v. HERETICS.

The following are extracts from a sermon preached this year (1927) on Sunday, January 23rd., before a large congregation, and evidently sanctioned by high authority. The preacher was Antoine Oldria, S.J., and the church was l'Eglise des Martyrs, Turino, Italy. It will be remembered that whatever the advantages or disadvantages of Mussolini's rule, there is a closer union at the present time between the Vatican and the government than has been the case for many years. It is said that only in England does the Church of Rome deny to her Bishops the right to extirpate heresy. "Though the Church is a perfect spiritual unity, she is nevertheless composed of men and it is her duty to encourage her members to protect the existing order out of love for the social community. Herefrom we must conclude that if repeated warnings and menaces are ineffectual and, if the Church has exhausted all her resources of Christian patience, when every endeavour to persuade has failed, and if no spiritual and material prompting has led to the expected result, and if the culprit, bereft of his goods and expelled from the community which he wants to pester, persists in his evil and continues to endanger the social order by his heretic propaganda and to disturb the peace of Christian consciences, **the Church is forced to make an example of him by taking refuge in the penalty of death** in order to protect herself and her members and in order to teach the heretic the correct interpretation of the Roman Catholic teachings.

"If the Roman religion is at present the only one recognised by the Italian State then it may go to work against the disturbers of Belief with greater vigour than the Church would . . . . . The Roman Catholic State has the right and the duty to protect her Religions, to wit, the only Religions which she recognises, and to exclude the spreading of every different Beliet by hindering the open practice of a heretic service. For such a cleansing the **penalty of death is necessary.**

"Remember that a heretic is worse than the greatest criminal, so **do not let your conscience be disturbed by a penalty,** which is required in order to remove from the world the evil germs of moral and material contagion."

ULLIN.

Chinese Religion.

"Most travellers if they care at all about the people's religion are interested in the Hung Mias or the Red Temple in the Nanking Road, Shanghai. Its chief diety is Kwan Yin, the Goddess of Mercy, the women's god. A shop near the main entrance, dealing in incense sticks, sandal-wood, paper baskets, etc., makes a yearly profit of about fifty-thousand dollars. The place has always been crowded when I have visited it. Prostitutes frequently come here seeking cleansing for spirit and body, and praying for success. The place is damp and stuffy. Dirt and dust besmirch the gods. The most attractive object is an ancient incense burner in a very artistic shrine in the centre of the court-yard. Within these are gods many—good gods, bad gods, big gods, small gods, rich gods, poor gods, great gods, humble gods, pretty gods, ugly gods, peaceful gods, warlike gods, gods armed and gods unarmed, kind gods, cruel gods, old gods, many eyed gods, many hand gods, no hand gods, bearded gods, shaven gods, red-faced, white-faced and black-faced gods ; gods of every description, gods for all. The most popular are the Goddess of Mercy, the God of Wealth and the God of Health. There are many scrolls on the walls. "A response to every prayer," says one, "Ask and receive" is the message of another. On the various shrines there are votive offerings such as cloth shoes, paper flowers, children's dresses, etc."

—The Rev. C. Spurgeon Medhurst

(late Missionary to China).

Correspondence.

[The Editor is not responsible for opinions expressed by correspondents].

Temperance and Prohibition.

SIR.—Many pronouncements have been made by persons of weight and importance on the Temperance question. That, made by the Protestant Primate of all Ireland commends itself to me, as the most sane, sensible and reasonable of all, viz., that we should begin with the young; and with their elders employ moral suasion—no tyranny nor absence of that constituent of true manhood and true womanhood, viz., power of choice.

Many years ago, I had occasion to study the tobacco question—especially juvenile smoking. In one of our leading reviews an eminent London physician stated that more evils could be traced to tobacco and over-indulgence in the luxuries of the table than to alcohol. In this opinion, he said, he was supported by many medical men of his acquaintance. On this hint I set to work and with the assistance of some good and true men who have gone to their rest and with the support of some who still remain I organised a Band of Hope in our Sunday School—the Young people pledging themselves to Total Abstinence from tobacco and strong drink until 18 or 20 years of age. Each was given, on signing the roll an ornamental card. By taking these to their homes and talking the matter over with parents and elder brothers and sisters moral suasion was accomplished and many came and took pledges—even members not of our congregation, and including some Roman Catholics. The addresses given were not abusive of traders but dealt with the matter from the point of view of health—setting forth how indulgence or over-indulgence was injurious to the heart and other vital organs. There was no vituperation of the Trade licensed by the State, while, of course, the many ragged children on our streets and in our slums were mentioned. As to Prohibition it is a combination of tyranny and fanaticism engendering rascality—even state officials whose duty it is to enforce it enriching themselves by 'winking' at violations of the Act and being rewarded. If there be anything in heredity those who live to see the next generation or two will find them wretched miserable citizens.

Yours, etc.,

JAMES KENNEDY.

Sermon—Faith and Works.

BY REV. S. P. WHITEHOUSE.

Text James 2; 14.—"What doth it profit my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? Can faith save him?"

It is often maintained that if Jesus suddenly appeared on earth to-day he would fail to recognise many of his followers. There is much truth in this. The teaching of Jesus and the teaching of Christianity have very little in common and it is sometimes difficult to believe that the first is supposed to be the foundation of the second. It does not seem to be generally realised that orthodox Christianity is a theological system that comprises other things besides the teaching of Jesus.

Jesus taught a simple way of life based on unquestioning trust in God, his Heavenly Father. The orthodox Church, supposed to be based on the teaching of Jesus, teaches a most complicated theological system. In addition to teaching people to have faith in God, the Church teaches them to have faith in the Deity of Jesus, in the Trinity, in the infallibility of the Pope or of the Bible, faith in the Holy Communion, in Baptism and in a host of other things which are not to be found in the teaching of Jesus. These additions to the teaching of Jesus become of supreme importance when it is declared that a man is saved by faith because the question then arises, faith in what; in part of the Church's teaching or all of it? If a man believes he is saved by works he can well afford to regard his faith as of secondary importance. "By their fruits ye shall know them" applies more in religion than in any other sphere of life. A man's faith—that is a man's real belief as distinct from what he says he believes—is shown by his actions and not by his words. There is sometimes a great difference between what we believe ourselves and what we want others to believe. A wise man realises this and always looks to a man's work and not to his professed faith as a true index to that man's Religion.

It is true that an ideal life, such as the one Jesus lived, is a combination of faith and works, but we should never forget that in this partnership, work is the dominant partner. The Christian Religion does

not owe its existence to the fact that Jesus had faith in God. Millions of men before Jesus had faith in God, but they did not start great religions on their courses. Christianity owes its existence to the fact that Jesus did something—went to the Cross.

The foundation of Christianity is a Crucified Jesus, not a religious teacher on the hills of Palestine. If it be maintained that what Jesus said is more important than what He did, the answer is that we should probably have never known what He said if He had not gone to the Cross. The work of Jesus is certainly more important than His faith because without the first we may have never known of the second. Yet in spite of this we are assured that salvation depends on faith. We reply that it depends primarily on works. If faith alone could save people we should have had the Kingdom of God upon earth centuries ago. Faith may be able to move mountains but a man is not saved by moving mountains. A man must win salvation by his own personal efforts. By proclaiming his faith from the house-tops, he may be able to deceive man but he will never deceive God. He may depend upon it that God discriminates between words which cost nothing, and deeds which cost much.

For our part we do not place much importance on the particular faith a man happens to hold. To us it is a secondary consideration. If a man's conduct is right then there is nothing wrong with his faith.

This is not the Church's idea of salvation but it is our idea of salvation and judging by the voices of the world's greatest figures and the still small voice within, it is God's idea of salvation.

Subscriptions to Debt Extinction Fund.

	£	s	d
Previously acknowledged ..	54	3	1
Members of Larne Congregation	0	9	0
Members of Cairncastle Congregation	0	9	0
Members of Banbridge Congregation	2	13	4
Miss Corbett, Warrenpoint ..	0	5	0
Larne Congregation, Annual Donation	2	0	0
Mrs. Magill, Warrenpoint ..	1	0	0

Farewell Meeting for Rev. M. Watkins.

On Wednesday, July 20th a well-attended gathering was held in the Mountpottinger Schoolroom to bid farewell to Rev. M. and Mrs. Watkins prior to their departure for Park Lane, Wigan. It was a tribute to Mr. Watkins's popularity with his fellow Ministers to find amongst those present the Moderator (Rev. D. J. Williams) who was supported by Revs. J. A. Kelly, G. J. Slipper, J. G. Davies, S. E. Bowen, J. J. Magill, E. Lockett, S. P. Whitehouse, A. Whitford, A. L. Agnew, E. Thompson, and Mr. N. Kirkham. Apologies for unavoidable absence were received from Revs. A. O. Ashworth, A. M. Bell, W. G. Marsden, F. Holt, W. H. Townley Tilson, J. D. Davies, A. Turner, Rev. J. Barron, Mr. C. J. M'Kisack Mr. A. Millin and others. The chair was occupied by Mr. Harold Thomas who expressed his thanks on behalf of the Congregation for all that Mr. Watkins had done both in and out of the Pulpit during his Ministry which was the longest of any since the Church was established over fifty years ago.

The Moderator, speaking on behalf of the Non-Subscribing Church said the departure would leave a gap in their ranks which would not be too readily filled. He mentioned that he and the guest of the evening had been "callow youths," together in the same Sunday School and the high regard he then held for Mr. Watkins was still maintained. Rev. J. A. Kelly said Mr. Watkins had set an example to many by his work at Presbytery Meetings and although he was no longer Clerk to the Bangor Presbytery he had many recollections of Mr. Watkins's thoughtfulness for such officer.

Rev. G. J. Slipper and Rev. A. Whitford also added their mead of praise.

Mr. James Orr, on behalf of the Committee wished Mr. Watkins and his family every success in their new home and remarked on the fact that Mr. Watkins had the capacity for making friends.

Speaking on behalf of the ladies of the Congregation Mrs. E. R. Jackson said that one praiseworthy feature of Mr. Watkins's

Ministry had been the encouragement he always gave to the ladies in their undertakings. She also congratulated Mrs. Watkins on the fact that although naturally of a retiring disposition she had willingly undertaken such duties as the position of President of the local branch of the Women's League. On behalf of the subscribers Mr. E. R. Jackson as Church Treasurer then handed Mr. Watkins a cheque with the very best wishes of all for the future.

At the hands of Mrs. H. Thomas, Mrs. Watkins was the recipient of a beautiful handbag and Miss Allison Orr presented Master Trevor Watkins with a Hornby mechanical train, accompanying same with a nice kiss. The young man " brought down the house " by his neat little expression of thanks.

The same young lady handed Mrs. Watkins a bouquet of choice flowers In returning thanks on behalf of himself and his family, Mr. Watkins said he could truthfully say that his twelve years at the Church had been happy ones and that he would always look back on the time with pleasant memories.

He certainly hoped to renew his acquaintance with the North of Ireland before many years had gone by and told the audience how his youthful son and heir had explained to him the ease with which the journey could be made.

Tea was then served and the evening was brought to a close by the rendering of musical items by the Choir under the direction of the Organist, Mr. H. I. Shepherd. Miss A. Beattie also contributed solos, and the proceedings terminated with Auld Lang Syne.

THE EYES OF A CHILD.

By a Manchester Teacher.

(Suggested by observing the clear eyes of a child in the class).

O eyes so deeply blue,
As quiet stars in evening skies,
Upon my restlessness you rise,
Hushing my heart anew.
O soul that shineth through
Thy purity leads me to prayer,
And, kneeling at His feet, I dare
Worship, because of you.

—C. D.

(" Manchester City News.")

Salvation.

The Rev. Rhonda Williams on his arrival at Donegall Quay, when he came to deliver the Synod lecture, was asked what he thought about the Belfast heresy case. He replied that he didn't know anything about it ; he had never heard of it. Yet, there were Belfast Presbyterians who imagined, at one time, that the whole civilised world was waiting with bated breath, for the decision.

A series of pamphlets, under the heading of " Ulster Pamphlets," issued as an outcome of the heresy trial, are designed to continue the championship of " orthodoxy " against those whom they assert " have departed from the good old paths." One is reminded of the old orthodox Presbyterian slogan : " Ruined by the fall, redeemed by the blood, and regenerated by the Holy Ghost," to which a liberal-minded and distinguished Presbyterian preacher added " And another ' R ' that means " rubbish."

It will be remembered that at the meeting of the Nonconformist Church Council, which decided to exclude Unitarians, the resolution was moved by the Wesleyan, Rev. Hugh Price Hughes, and seconded by the Congregationalist, Dr. Berry, of Wolverhampton. That Dr. Berry should have done such a thing was a matter of surprise to many for he had been given the opportunity of becoming successor to Henry Ward Beecher, who in his day was called " King of the Pulpit," but whom many of the " unco guid " did not consider quite orthodox. " Ulster Pamphlet, No. 7," gives an inkling of the meaning of the change which came over Dr. Berry. " The late Dr. Berry, who had become a modernist, told his friend, Rev. W. Jowett, of being called to speak to an old sinful woman who was dying. He told her of the beautiful life of Jesus and His grand teaching. But the old woman said, " That's not what I want, I'm a sinner." He bowed his head and that moment the old truth of the passion and death of Christ for sinners came back to him. He told that story, and the woman said, " Go on, go on ; that's what I want." And he got her into Salvation, and said, " I got myself in too."

Be that as it may ; but, one of our ministers was challenged by an Archdeacon

of the Church of England, as to what consolation he could give to a dying man, who had lived a very bad life, and the reply was, "Read the parable of the prodigal son." "Quite right," said the Archdeacon, "I quite see the logic of your position. But, then, at that time, the full Christian revelation had not been given out. Pentecost was yet to come." The attitude of God towards the sinner, is the attitude of a loving father towards an erring son, and that attitude is independent of time, place or theology. Jesus Christ opened men's eyes to a fact, to which they were oblivious, and which, alas! later on became eclipsed, and clouded over, by teaching which belonged to the Dark Ages into which civilization sank, after the world's greatest crime, the murder of its Divine Teacher. "But aren't we saved by the death of Christ?" "No, that is unscriptural. We are saved by His life, reconciled by His death." It is not God who is reconciled to us, though the Church articles teach that; but we who are reconciled to God. God required no reconciling. He was reconciled to us all the time. At night, it is not the sun that has turned away from us, but we who have turned away from the sun. The sacrifice of Christ for the world, in his heroism, in his going to the bitter end, in His boundless love for His brethren, reveals a great loving heart at the centre of all things.

Amongst the wreaths at the Belfast City Hall, on Armistice Day, was one from the Salvation Army—"He died for us." Yes, if His death be thought of in the same way as that of all the others for whom wreaths were laid. The sacrifice of the soldier, the sacrifice of the patriot, the sacrifice of the Saviour of the world, all are under one great law, the sacrifice from the foundation of the world, the constant forthstreaming love of God, which goes on all the time.

—ULLIN.

"'As a little child. . . . .'; that has been the motto, as of the saints, so of the wisest of mankind. Your mind is a good instrument; only keep it free and sincere; keep away from selfishness, self-conceit, from the vanity of learning, and from the vanity of resentment against learning. Open it to experience, and take that as largely as you can. We know the type of man who, on the whole gets nearest to truth. It is not the cleverest. It is, I think, the sincerest."—BOSANQUET.

Community Life.

Close to one of our Manses on the sea-shore is a small group of cottages, in which spontaneously, for some years past, a community of our own household of faith, and their own personal friends has gradually grown up, and every summer sees there a few of our ministers who regard the spot as a second home.

The Moravians made community-life, at one time, an essential part of their church organisation and discipline, and at Fairfield, Manchester, may be seen, a little off the main road, a charming little oasis of rather old-fashioned houses, arranged in a square, with their church, and schools and Sisters' Homes, and theological college. When the community were all engaged in the same trade it was possible for the members to live together in that way. It is well-known, in Belfast, that Roman Catholics are as far as possible compelled to live together in certain neighbourhoods, though not in the same pleasant conditions as those of a Moravian settlement. One sometimes finds Quaker communities. In Cumberland at Parza, near Cockermouth, there is one. There have been communities, and still are such, arranged on a co-operative basis.

It is rather a weakness to church life where there is wanting more or less, the community principle. The fact of congregations coming together only on Sundays, and that nowadays, none too regularly, and members remaining strangers from year end to year's end is not sufficient; in fact in some cases "new-comers" being made to feel themselves "frozen-out" have turned to churches whose devotional atmosphere they considered more congenial.

It is one of the signs of the times however, that the "community ideal" is growing, and "garden cities" and modern methods of town planning, which now has become a science having its chairs in universities, are all in the direction of community life.

"ROYAL ARCH."

O Friend,
Leave Heresy to the Heretic,
Religion to the Orthodox,
But gather thy Truth
From the dust of thy Experience.

Where St. John Used to Walk.

There has recently been discovered a vast underground city in Asia Minor, where the Ephesus of the Bible used to be. Ephesus was one of the first and finest of the Christian settlements, and these catacombs are revealing relics of the ancient inhabitants of the city through whose streets St. John, in his old age, used to walk.

Catacombs are scarcely cities, in the ordinary sense of the word. There is no doubt that the early Christians used to live in them, but by force of circumstances rather than choice. Actually they were burying-places.

Those who have traversed the bewildering and draughty passages of the Roman catacombs will have no difficulty in conjuring up the catacombs of Ephesus. The researchers, Professors Keil and Deissman, have disclosed vast treasures, mural paintings of exquisite workmanship, earthen jugs studded with gems, crosses, and manuscript legends of great historic importance. These are being taken to the Archæological Museums in Smyrna.

This most important discovery recalls an ancient legend. It used to be believed that St. John was not dead, but was sleeping. It was said that the ground beneath which he lay buried at times moved, as if to betoken the presence of a living body.

The grounds of this quaint belief were, of course, the words spoken by Christ to St. Peter in reference to St. John as He and the disciples were walking by the Sea of Galilee after the Resurrection :

"If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? Follow thou me."

St. John, the Saint of Ephesus, here records his early memories. Certainly he was the last of the Apostles to die, and lived to a great age.

It is more than possible that the very catacombs have been disclosed to which in his extreme old age St. John used to be carried to exhort the Christians "to love one another."

NOTE.—*Communications intended for publication in this Magazine must in all cases be sent direct to the Editor. Matter sent direct to the Printer will in every case be ignored. In future no notice will be taken of articles, reports, etc., that have not passed through the hands of the Editor. The Business Agent alone is entitled to send notices direct to the printer.*

Shakespeare's Pall-bearer.

An astonishing discovery has lately been made in the old Masonic graveyard at Fredericksburg, Virginia, U.S.A., of the grave of one of Shakepeare's pall-bearers, Edward Heldon. The gravestone was discovered lying flat on the ground under a tangle of weeds and creepers with the upper corner chipped off and the old English letters dim but traceable :

"Here lies the Body of Edward Heldon,

Practitioner in Physics and Chirurgery. Born in Bedfordshire, England, in the year of our Lord 1542. Was contemporary with and one of the pall-bearers of William Shakespeare of the Avon. After a brief illness his spirit ascended, in the year of our Lord 1618, aged 76."

"The Speculative Mason."

Ursula Sowthiel or Southill, better known to posterity as Mother Shipton was born at Knaresborough, Yorkshire, about 1486. Regarded all through her lifetime as a witch, she yet managed to escape a witch's fate and died at an extreme old age near Clifton in Yorkshire. Her grave was covered by a massive tombstone, and on it was carved :—

Here lies she who never lied,
Whose skill often has been tried,
Her prophecies shall still survive,
And ever keep her name alive.

Wolsley was at the height of his power and the monastic system firmly established in England, when she predicted the downfall of both. People laughed her to scorn, but in due time these and other prophecies came to pass. Two volumes filled with her prophecies are in the British Museum. Motor-cars, iron-clads, the Crystal Palace and the great wars have come to pass.

Carriages without horses shall go,
And accidents fill the world with woe !
Iron in the water shall float
As easily as a wooden boat ;
A house of glass shall come to pass
In England, and then—alas ! alas !
Wars, great wars, shall follow.

Reports.

York Street, Belfast.— There has been little to report during the past two months beyond the usual activities of summer. A very large number of our members have been out of town but those who have remained have made special efforts to keep up the attendances at worship with the result that our Meeting House is still crowded in the evening. On a recent Sunday we sent about 120 members to our old friends in Raloo. The Meeting House was filled and Mr. M'Cleery preached an appropriate sermon. We had to depart at an all too early hour after an excellent luncheon provided by our hosts. At Ballycarry corner and other points we were greeted by members of York Street, members on holiday in the district. One of the objects of these country visits has been to let those who are newcomers to our household of faith see that they are not members of an isolated independent Church, but of a denomination. Another has been to ensure a full and stimulating service for our congregations in the country which so often feel themselves to be cut off. As the long line of cars swung homeward we felt that once more a practical step had been taken in the direction of Denominational Unity so often preached but so little practised. An instance of another piece of work in that direction was found on our return. Our lay preachers had in the course of the day occupied no less than four different pulpits while many of our members who had not gone to the country had taken the opportunity of visiting other churches in the city. Again our evening service was attended by a number of English visitors. Thus in one day York Street was represented in probably more than eight of our sister churches while we made welcome visitors from several others. It is rather disencouraging, however, when we look on the other side of the picture. At our recent Flower Services, announced in the different churches eleven of their members turned up. In the past three years it is doubtful if more than twenty Non-Subscribers resident in the City have been amongst the hundreds who have worshipped with us and some indeed do not seem to know exactly where our place of worship is. To us it is, of course, of little matter, but those of us who wish to make our members members of the denomination as well, find our task made no easier by the indifference, indeed it is becoming increasingly difficult to get our members to attend denominational functions as a result. On Wednesday the 17th August we were honoured by a visit from Dr. Preston Bradley. Dr. Bradley gave an address which will long be remembered by his large audience. He was afterwards presented with a small token of our esteem as was Mrs. Bradley, and on announcing that it was his birthday he was a little astonished to find those present rising to interrupt him with musical honours. It was a great joy to our people to give a real Ulster welcome to the land of his fathers, to Dr. and Mrs. Bradley. Invitations had been sent to the majority of our country Churches and each of those in the city and tea had been provided for all who might come but unfortunately the notice we had been able to give had been short which probably accounts for the fact that only two ministers and half-a-dozen people were able to be with us.

The Sunday School outing was arranged for Carnalea but owing to the weather we changed the venue to Holywood at the last minute. Our teachers deserve great credit for the way in which they met a difficult situation and catered for all. Rev. R. J. Hall, M.A., another son of our Irish Church, who has done good work abroad, was our preacher on two Sunday evenings. Opportunity is being taken by our workers of the quieter days to carry out further improvements to the Church and Hall, and we are preparing once more for our Annual Service in the Ulster Hall on the last Sunday of September. An overflow service will be held in York Street if necessary, but we hope our country friends will avoid the disappointments of last year by being early. If they notify us hospitality will be provided at any time of the day.

* *

Ballee.—The annual summer Sunday school excursion took place on the 21st July, the favoured spot this year being Donaghadee. About 100 children and adults travelled by motor buses from the Chur h grounds to Downpatrick, and from thence by rail to this beautiful seaside resort, and on arrival a hearty lunch was enjoyed. A varied

programme of games and sport followed, and the time slipped away all too quickly for those on pleasure bent. There was a sort of old time fair going on in the village, and as each of the young folk was tempted to patronise same, it may be taken for sure that the silver distributed burnt no holes in little pockets. Races, cricket, dancing, and an impromptu concert in the railway pavilion by a pierrot and pierette troupe, made a further enjoyable contribution to the programme. Fortunately the only shower of the day fell during the period of the second refreshment. The party arrived on the return journey at the Meeting House between 9 and 10 o'clock, p.m., tired, but joyous, and wishing the day could be lived over again.

* *

Ballycarry.—A children's Floral Service was held for the first time in Ballycarry on the 3rd Sunday of July, the preacher being the Rev. A. Bell of Ballyclare. The Sunday School children sang the special hymns which they had practised. Miss Lillian M'Kee, one of the scholars taking the solo part. Mr. Campbell of Ailsa Craig, Whitehead, was the organist. On July 7th, the Annual Sunday School Excursion took place, a party numbering over 50 journeying by chars-a-banc to Cairncastle. Although the day throughout proved extremely wet, everyone spent a most enjoyable time, owing to the very great kindness of the Rev. and Mrs. Thompson, who devoted themselves entirely to giving their visitors a happy time. Hearty thanks were conveyed to Mr. and Mrs. Thompson without whose efforts the day would have been a dismal failure.

* *

Downpatrick.—The Congregational and Sunday-school excursion took place in glorious summer weather on Thursday, Aug. 11th. Headed by the Hollymount Pipe Band, the party marched from the church to the train in the time-honoured fashion. At Newcastle luncheon was taken in the spacious railway pavilion, the catering, in the hands of Mr. George Stewart, of the Royal Bakery, Belfast, being carried out in excellent style. Races, cricket and football engaged the energies of the children on the sands as the tide receded. On arrival at the church on the homeward journey, Mr. Callow thanked the band; Mr. Hugh Dickson for his organising work; the collectors, Misses Alice Robinson, Martha Moffett, Nora Patterson, Gertie Kelly, and Madge Huddleston, and Mrs. J. Newman, and Mr. J. Kinnear. The singing of the National Anthem brought a very happy day to an end.

* *

Greyabbey.— The Annual Excursion in connection with the Sunday School was held on the 8th July. Many members of the congregation travelled with the children. Bangor was the place selected which was reached after a pleasant motor run through Portaferry, Ballyhalbert, Ballywalter and Donaghadee. After tea the party separated and amused themselves, according to their own inclinations. The excursionists arrived at Greyabbey about 10 o'clock having spent a most enjoyable afternoon.

The Floral Service was held on Sunday July 17th. The church was tastefully decorated by the Sunday School pupils. The singing was led by the children and the collection taken up by four of the boys.

* *

Killinchy.—The Annual Choir Excursion usually arranged for August Bank Holiday, took place on August 1st. A company of about 20 young people journeyed to the Antrim Coast by motor bus. The weather which has been broken during the summer was not propitious, but the morning was fine with bright, warm sunshine. By the kind and genial co-operation of Rev. Eustace and Mrs. Thompson arrangements were made to concentrate on Cairncastle. The School was placed at our disposal, where we were able to have lunch. We were greatly indebted to Mr. and Mrs. Thompson for boiling water and the use of the church cups and saucers. After lunch accompanied by Mr. and Mrs. Thompson we proceeded by an inland road through Glenarm and thence to Carnlough and beyond where we left our conveyance and walked up a glen to see a glorious waterfall, the sight of which did us good. The afternoon turned out showery, but the company escaped serious wetting. We returned by the coast road to Ballygally and thence to Cairncastle for tea which we all thoroughly enjoyed, after our afternoon's enjoyment. A hearty vote of thanks to Mr. and Mrs. Thompson was proposed and carried with acclamation for all they had done to make our outing so

successful and enjoyable. The company returned home in the evening having spent a happy day among glorious scenery.

* *

Larne and Kilwaughter.—On Tuesday, August 9th, the Annual Summer fete and Sale of Work was held in the schoolroom and grounds adjoining the Meeting House. As our local newspaper reported "for many years past this has been one of the most popular events of the summer season in Larne." This year's fete was no exception to the rule. Favoured by an ideal summer day, the grounds lent themselves beautifully for "al fresco" teas and for indulging in the many ingenious games that were arranged. The stalls of the Sale of Work in the Schoolroom showed evidence of the amount of work that had been done in preparation, not the least attractive being the results of the successful cake and bread baking competitions. Soon after three o'clock, a brief opening ceremony took place in the schoolroom, when everyone was delighted at the presence of the Rev. James Kennedy, the senior minister of the congregation. Acting as chairman, Mr. Kennedy, in fitting words introduced Miss Kinder who was to be opener of the sale and asked her to declare the proceedings open. Miss Kinder, who was warmly received, said she was delighted to see such a large number of friends there, and hoped that they would all have a very happy time. It was with very great pleasure that she declared the sale open. On a vote of thanks being moved and seconded to Miss Kinder the compliment was further emphasised by the presentation of a lovely bouquet of roses by little Miss Muriel Begg. During the whole of the evening an orchestra (conducted by Mr. Ralph Hay) discoursed popular and cheerful selections of music, and since special illuminations had been arranged among the trees of the grounds the whole scene and setting was one of joy and pleasure. It is with the utmost appreciation we record our thanks to one and all who assisted in making the summer fete the success it was, and it is also with satisfaction we are able to record that financially the results of our various labours were most encouraging.

* *

Newry.—The annual services in connection with the First Presbyterian (Unitarian) Church Sunday School, Newry, were held on Sunday, July 31st, the Rev. George J. Slipper officiating.

In the morning the preacher, basing his discourse on the text, "A little child shall lead" (Isaiah xi. v. 6), spoke concerning "the worth of the child."

The service in the evening was in the nature of a Children's Flower Service, and special hymns were rendered by the children, who had been trained by Mrs. Slipper. the following hymns were sung, "The children are gathering from near and from far," "If you have a pleasant thought, sing it," and "When the Lord of Love was here, happy hearts to Him were dear." The Psalm, "Let us with a gladsome mind" was also sung, Mrs. Moore, A.L.C.M., the gifted blind singer, who has helped on former occasions, singing the opening lines of each verse, and the children, the refrain. In addition Mrs. Moore sang two solos—"A little sun, a little rain," and "The Holy City," and joined with Mrs. M'Kinstry in the vesper hymn, "Softly the silent night, falleth from God." Mrs. Moore's cultured rendering of these solos was a most pleasing feature of the service. The Minister based an appropriate address on the text, "Your life is hid with Christ in God" (Colossians iii. 3). Before singing the closing hymn, "Saviour again to Thy dear name we raise," Mr. Slipper thanked the friends from the other Churches for their presence and help. He specially referred to the attendance of the members of the Church Lads' Brigade, a number of whom were present under the charge of Lieut. C. Smith, and said how greatly the kindly act was appreciated by his congregation. Such friendliness and co-operation helped in no small measure to lower the barriers which divided the several Churches, and he tendered his personal thanks to Rev. Canon Swanzy and Rev. W. M. Taylor, as well as to the officers, for permitting the attendance of the Brigade. The church was decorated with flowers and shrubs sent by Miss Barcroft, The Glen; Mrs. Weir (The Commons) The Misses Warnock, Mrs. Trotter, Miss Cowan (Benagh), and Mrs. Slipper. In addition the scholars brought bunches of flowers, all of which were sent after the service to the Newry General Hospital.

The collections, which were generous, were on behalf of the Sunday School funds. Mrs. Slipper presided with her customary ability at the organ.

Newtownards.—The Anniversary Service was held on the last Sunday in July. Notwithstanding the fact that a special service of a public nature was being held in another church at the same hour, there was a good attendance. The preacher was the Rev. D. J. Williams, Moderator of the Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church, who delivered an excellent sermon. The first annual Sunday School Excursion for many years is now being planned. It is expected that the teachers will have thirty children for whom to cater.

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Mountpottinger.—On July 31st, Rev. J. J. Magill declared the pulpit vacant. The services on August 7th and 14th were conducted by Rev. Hugh Warnock of Walsall, who was spending a holiday at his native town of Greyabbey. It is with regret we record the death of Mr. James Hill, which took place suddenly at his residence in King's Road, Knock, on July 12th. To his widow who has been connected all her life with our Congregation we tender sincere sympathy.

* *

Raloo.—On Saturday, 16th July, our annual Sunday School Picnic was held. The weather was ideal. After the scholars and the local Flute Band had had tea at the Church, we all resorted to the field below the Manse, where our annual picnics have been held almost every year since their initiation in 1876. There, as the evening wore on, hundreds came from all over the countryside and even from the nearby towns. Amusements and dancing were indulged in until a late hour. The band, leaving the field played "Auld Lang Syne" and then all dispersed feeling well pleased with the evening's enjoyment. On Sunday, 7th August, we had a visit from the York Street Congregation, Belfast. Upwards of 150 people arrived at the morning service, and these, together with a large attendance of our own members succeeded in creating a record, namely a full house at morning service. After the service which was conducted by our own minister Rev. J. M'Cleery, the visitors went to the Manse where a noble spread had been provided by the local ladies. The men folk then began to show how useful they are on occasions, by serving out in quick time, without a single breakage, the food and liquid that had been provided. These Congregational visits tend to promote co-operation amongst the local workers in country places scattered over wide areas. They tend also to promote friendship among the various churches. After the repast, the visitors scattered in all directions to see the sights of the locality. The weather rather misty in the morning turned out better in the afternoon, and our friends had a very pleasant homeward journeyed by the beautiful Antrim Coast Road. Everybody was well pleased, both visitors and visited, and so ended a very pleasant and helpful day.

Obituary.

Mrs. Jane M'Bride.

The congregation of Killinchy has lost by death an old and faithful member. Mrs. M'Bride, relict of the late Mr. Hugh M'Bride, Ballyministra, died on July 31st, after a long and exceptionally painful illness, which was, however, borne with the utmost patience and fortitude in a truly Christian spirit. Mrs. M'Bride was a member of an old Killinchy family, connected from the first with the Remonstrant Church. She died at the ripe age of 80 years and considering the great pain she endured for so many weeks her best friends could not wish her life on earth to be prolonged. Mrs. M'Bride was well-known and respected in the district. Her genial and charitable nature made her many friends, for she was ever ready with a helping hand wherever there was need of her services, and these she gave without stint. Her daughter, Mrs. Herron, her only issue, ministered well and faithfully, at her bedside, during her prolonged illness, to whom we tender our respectful sympathy. Her remains were interred in the family burying ground, Killinchy, New Meeting House Green, on Tuesday, 2nd August. The funeral was attended by a large number of friends and neighbours.

Robert O'Neill.

The O'Neills are a very old family in Ballyhalbert. On August 6th, died a boy, much beloved, a scholar in the Sunday

School at Ballyhemlin, Robert, aged 14. His father, Willie O'Neill is a member of the Meeting House Committee, a leading Orangeman and has been most of his life sea-faring, but, in recent years has carried on a business in Ballyhalbert. The funeral was largely attended. The coffin covered with flowers was carried by relatives along the Shore Road, to the old church-yard. There is wide-spread sympathy with both Mr. and Mrs. O'Neill and the family, in their bereavement.

Mr. Edward Curry.

A few weeks ago, there was a short obituary of Mrs. Edward Curry, a very old member of Ballyhemlin. This is now to be followed by one of her husband, Mr. Edward Curry, a life-long resident in Ballyhalbert, as generations of his family before him were, all following the same sea-faring tradition. As a fisherman, his work often took him away from home for a long period at a time, away round to the South of Ireland, or the North of Scotland as the case may be, and in later years, he was grave-digger in the Ballyhalbert Churchyard. At the time of his wife's funeral there was a small lump on the side of his neck, of which he took little notice; but it was cancer and grew to an enormous size like a big ball, gradually closing up the windpipe, until the end came at 10-30 p.m. on July 30th, after weeks of great agony. He was, however, very uncomplaining, and always had a welcome for his minister. He was one of a generation which has now few representatives, and he has lived to see great and wonderful changes in the world. "Unto God's gracious keeping we commit him."

Those Bairns.

"Mummy," said a little girl to her mother, "can I put on my new party frock?" "Of course not, dear" replied her mother, "we must keep that for parties, or for when we have ladies and gentlemen in for the evening." The little girl considered this unpleasant reply for a little while and then said, "Please Mummy let me. Can't you pretend that you're a lady and father's a gentleman, just for to-night."

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